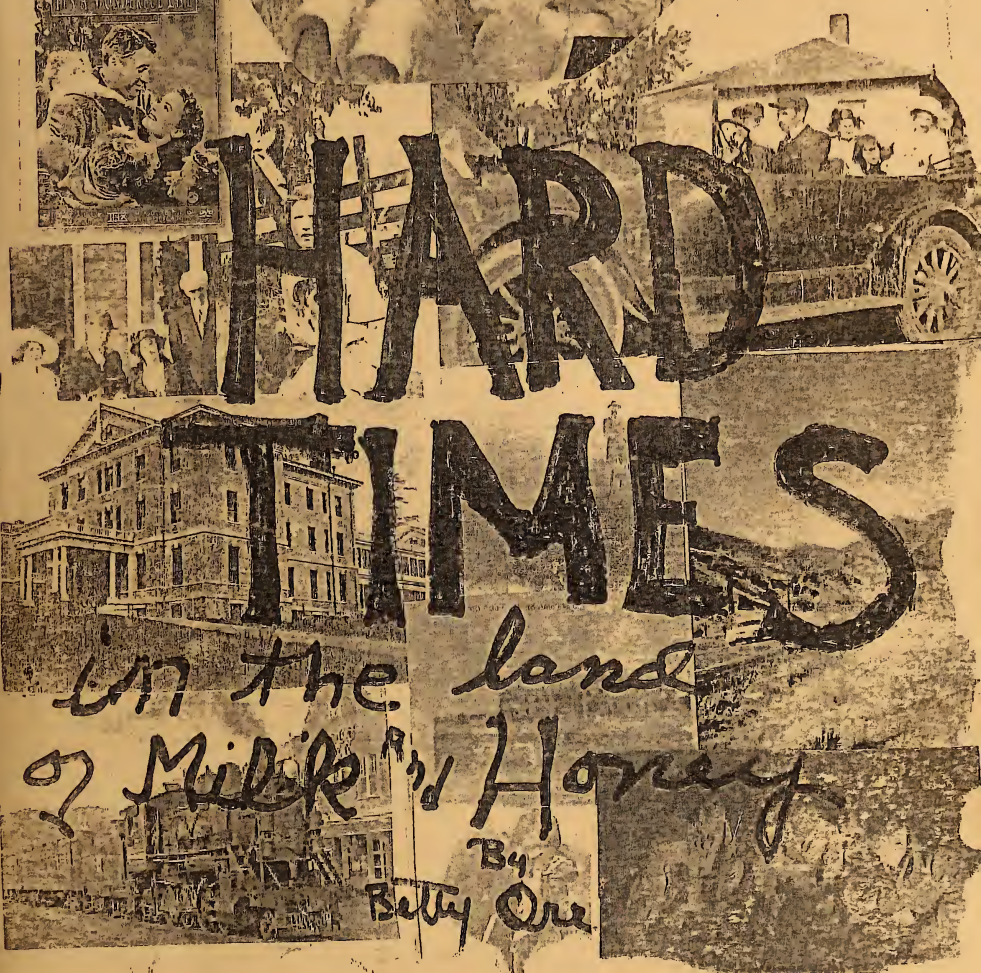




HARD TIMES

*in the land
of Milk & Honey*

*By
Betty Orr*



SADIE HAWKINS DAY

"I'LL BE HOME FOR XMAS"

REMEMBER WHEN----

1930s-40s

Candy bars, gum, coke, etc. were five cents. Hershey bars and Mr. Good bar were about eight inches long—5 Cents, too. Newspapers were often 5 cents. Liberty Magazine was 10 cents as was Saturday Evening Post.

Milk came in a glass bottle and was left on your front porch each morning at dawn. Bread and sweet rolls could also be delivered this way. Groceries were ordered via phone and delivered once a day. (bread was 10 Cents per loaf)

You got 25 cents for babysitting for three or four hours (also washed dishes!)

Water to wash the dishes—sometimes for tub baths--, heated in small tank on side of wood range. (Water was usually used over again for a second child's bath)

Silk hose that 'ran' and had to be mended with a little hook thing

SWABBY

Leg paint when you didn't have hose. A line drawn up the back of your leg to represent the 'seam' in your hose—(which you didn't have .)

Panty girdles, juice- can hair curlers, stick-out petticoats, wigs, crocheted gloves, golashes with clicky hooks, wooden shoes, toe rubbers for high heeled shoes and

Mink stoles, veils on hats and Saturday afternoon tea. Yellow slickers to keep off the rain. Little minks to wear around your neck that hooked together via their tiny mouths. "Snoods" to cover your hair for dress up. Beauty marks! Tangee lipstick.

Blackboards in the class room instead of white boards. Erasers that had to be cleaned and lots of chalk dust everywhere. Fountain pens and gum erasers.

Ten cent hamburgers and milkshakes for 15 cents (if they had a scoop of ice cream in them.) Our guys wore "duck-tails" and long sideburns and 'saddles'.

Bead curtains dividing booths in fancy restaurants—privacy, you know! Juke boxes were called nickelodeons and were 5 cents a record to play.

Cars had running boards but no air conditioning and worst of all, no heaters.

DIRTY CORDS

LONG KEY CHAINS

TOE RINGS

DRAFT CARDS

FLY BOYS

SEALINS LOOZ

SHORE LEAVE

Enjoy!

Betty Orr

HARD TIMES

IN THE LAND OF MILK AND HONEY

BY

BETTY ORR



INTRODUCTION

For the past two decades, while living in retirement homes, I have been privileged to interview folks from across this great country. They have shared with me their hardships, their heartbreaks, their lives during the Great Depression of the 1930s. A few folks, a very few, felt no impact: For them, life went on as usual. Some of us were teen-agers or pre-teens and we didn't realize how tough it was for our parents. For far too many, both young and old, those years were a time of misery, worry and endless disappointment.

Because they had dwindling orders for their products, factories closed and workers were laid off. Folks lost their homes, their farms, their businesses. In cities there were long bread lines where the hungry stood waiting and hoped to be fed. Thousands of men hopped trains and rode the box cars as far as possible. Some settled down in "shanty towns" or "hobo camps" beneath city bridges.

Many young men were accepted into Three C Camps where they could learn a trade, take classes and enjoy a warm bed and nutritious meals. Today there remain mountain lodges, bridges, stands of timber, scenic trails, etc. —all projects of the CCCs. Other youths, mostly men but a scattering of young women too, entered the armed forces.. The mid 1800s had seen the advent of orphan trains. It is estimated that as many as 250,000 children were put aboard, usually in box cars, and placed in orphanages or private homes because parents could not feed nor clothe them. Many were actually orphans, of course. Adopting parents could order a boy or girl, preferred age and even hair and eye color. At first some children were made to be servants. Though orphan trains were said to have ceased in 1929 I spoke with several folks who recalled their experience on such a train in the 1930s. One said his orphanage experience was remarkably pleasant. He said, now years later, reunions were common.

Under the New Deal, our government formed the WPA and the PWA to repair the infrastructure of America and to put men to work. Added to our population was an enormous influx of immigrants. All who came hoped to prosper, to find their dreams fulfilled in this great Land of Milk and Honey! But on December 7, 1941, came the attack on Pearl Harbor which changed the world for all of us.

FOREWORD

No one ever told us it was The Great Depression but, to be sure, things had changed. For instance, in the 1930s we usually had a grandmother sharing our home as well as an assortment of young cousins. My little brother and sister and I liked this arrangement because we had more kids to play with. We never questioned why they were there nor did it matter. In those terrible times, when the wage earner in a family lost his job it was not uncommon for families to bunch together to eliminate some expenses and to share others.

Before the crash my dad operated an upscale restaurant with a well-to-do clientele that chose to entertain there night after night. These folks also chose to put everything 'on the cuff', Once each month they would come in and "settle up." But after that fateful October day, 1929, they did not to settle up.---Ever!

Dad continued in business as long as possible but eventually he lost his beautiful, underfinanced restaurant as well as our car, our home and our furniture. It all went away with the restaurant. For a few months we lived at Scappoose, where dad was put in charge of a large dairy. This meant he had a huge herd of dairy cows to milk twice each day. He was not accustomed to this kind of work and each night his hands would be bleeding when he finally finished his chores. Before World War One he had majored in Agriculture at O.A.C. He had applied, and was finally accepted, to teach Agriculture on the Warm Springs Indian Reservation. Thus began a whole new life-style for our family, one that we would always cherish and long remember. But change came abruptly when it was time for me to attend high school. Once again our family was uprooted and placed in a new and unfamiliar environment. This time at Chemawa Indian School, north of Salem, Oregon.

But this was the story all over America. Families were displaced and little children were thrust into new and unfamiliar surroundings. We were one of the more fortunate families. There was not much spendable cash but we had a large and comfortable home and plenty of food on the table. Many others were not so fortunate. Here are some of their sad and heartbreaking experiences which they have shared with me.

HARD TIMES

How well I remember the summer of 1936. Each morning I would dress in my pink uniform and apron and drive to the cannery hoping to be called for the day shift. Dozens of girls would be gathered outside the main door by a loading platform waiting for their names to be called. If we were lucky, we could earn 25 cents an hour. A few girls would be hired full time. Where was the boss? Would they run cherries? Maybe strawberries? Cherries were best. When it was time to start we would all become very quiet while we waited. Waited. Why didn't the shift boss come out? It was time. Time to start the shift. Where was he anyway?

At last the shift boss would open the door, look us all over, and shout, "I can use twenty girls on the belt today. Let's see. You and you and this group. Follow me. The rest of you can check again tomorrow". The twenty lucky girls would disappear, the door would close and that was it for another day. No work for the rest of us. How did he decide who to pick? If we were bold enough to ask him, the boss looked bored and said, "Well, things are awful slow right now. Sorry."

We already knew things were awful slow. We didn't have to wait in line at the movies anymore and we didn't take family vacations like we used to. It had now been seven years since that fateful October of 1929. Dad didn't own The Broadmore Restaurant now and we could no longer get free ice cream cones either. When the crash came our dad's customers couldn't pay their debts. Could dad pay his? Probably not because our whole life had changed. Our new furniture and finally, our home were no longer ours. I seem to recall living one summer on a farm in Yamhill County. Probably with grandparents.

Then it was the car: Our handsome car with the gray velvet seats, glass bead curtains that swayed and jingled as we rode about the streets of Marshfield, Oregon. There were matching cut glass bud vases by the back seat and small folding chairs for extra passengers. It all went away. It was over.

WORKING OUR WAY WEST

Do I remember the great depression? I sure enough do! I remember most of all those dust storms. We lived in Kansas: it was 1934 as I recollect. Mama would close the windows when she knew the dust was comin,' but it just seeped in around the window frames anyway. Couldn't keep it out. In our food, in everything. We all had coughs all the time. Great clouds of brown dust, dark as night! Awful, just awful.

Papa's corn crop turned brown and died right there in the field. Finally my folks gave up. They wanted to sell our place but no one was buyin'. Most folks were like us: No crops and no money.

Well, finally my ma and pa decided to just leave it all and go to Oregon. Ma had a cousin out here. Been out here for years. We had a car; well, a car of sorts. It was long and black and had a top on it but the sides were open. Us four kids were in the back seat and ma held our new baby so's she could feed it now and then. We had quilts tucked around us to keep us warm and we had bacon sandwiches to nibble on.

I recollect we camped at night. Folks had a tent that sort of hooked onto the side of the car. No beds; we all slept right on the ground but it was late May, not too cold. Well, it was cold in the mountains but we headed south and finally after several weeks we made it to California so's we could pick stuff. Sure enough: we first picked strawberries and that was fun. We ate 'bout as many as we picked. Then we did other stuff: cherries and raspberries. I didn't want to go to Oregon. Us kids was likin' it in California but after we picked beans, Pa packed us up and headed for Bandon. When we first saw that ocean we liked to died! Just could not believe it. Later my folks got a little place at the beach and settled down. And that's how we got out here.

IT'S A STRIKE!

Sure, I like to bowl. My folks had a bowling alley here in Albany for many years. But if it hadn't been for the awful grasshoppers, I imagine I would be a happy farm girl in South Dakota. In about 1934 the grasshoppers hit the area around Huron. Mom said she would put wet towels on the window sills to try to keep them out but they got in anyway. They were everywhere. Then there was that terrible drought, too. They finally just walked away from their farm because no one had money to buy it. And nobody wanted to farm with all those grasshoppers eating everything in sight. And the dust. You have read about the dust storms, I know.

Dad loaded what he could into his big flat bed truck, tucked in mom and their two kids and headed for The Yakima Valley, Washington. They still had \$500 and they were able to buy a farm up there. Until the war started they ran cattle and grew wheat but after Pearl Harbor they moved to Portland and both mom and dad got jobs as welders in the Oregon Shipyard. They said "goodbye" to Sunnyside; they were through with farming forever. You see, they hadn't planned to be farmers.

My mom had been a teacher and my dad almost finished school to be a pharmacist. After three years of college he got a call from his father that he was needed back home on the family farm. So he gave up his dream and went back home.

When the war ended, they were in a much better financial condition. Dad was able to buy a home here in Albany and a bowling alley down on First Avenue. Camp Adair was going strong and his business was very good. Eventually, he built his own building and enlarged his business. He was also able to invest in quite a chunk of property out in the Knox-Butte area. I was born here in 1948. Our home then was on 8th and Elm. I made one special friend who would be close to me always. We went through grade school and high school and even business college together. I am sad to tell you, however, that she has now passed away. Our parents have passed on, too. But we keep in close touch with our siblings: Both mine and my husband's. We are close knit families.

HAPPY IN HARD TIMES

My folks moved to Oregon from Montana when I was three. First we had a rented place in Richardson Gap area: When I was old enough I went to Scio Grade School. Then my dad bought us a home in Lebanon. It was on third street and there was a two story house and a barn and it had an "outhouse". I remember he paid \$800 for the property. Money was so different then. I guess it was the depression but us kids didn't know it. One year we each got a nickel for Christmas; that was our present. We could buy combs for a nickel and I got a nice one. But remember the heating stoves that had a kind of fancy, silver decoration on the top? I laid my comb on that and darned if it didn't melt. I was one sad kid, I can tell you! When I was eighteen, I graduated from Lebanon High School.

It was in my Junior or Senior year that our house got hit by lightning. It was badly damaged. My older brother tried to climb up and see how much of the attic was burned and he fell and was badly injured. He had to be in the hospital. Us kids had to sleep in a tent all winter because we couldn't live in the house. My folks slept in a kind of room built off the back porch where they kept the wood and the canned fruit and stuff. In those days people canned everything in sight. Of course we had a big garden and fruit trees.

That was the great thing about the Willamette Valley; everything grew here. When we were old enough, we could get jobs picking strawberries; that came first. Then, on to cherries and raspberries and loganberries. Later, there was fruit like peaches and pears. Then hops. Oh, walnuts and filberts, too, in the fall. I picked up filberts about one day! I remember my mother worked in the "nut house". I guess they were doing something like shelling the nuts.

I got married in the summer of 1939. We wanted to get married in Oregon but at time there was some kind of a law that you had to wait three days after you got the license. So we went to Stevenson, Washington to get married.

A DESERT RAT

How come I live way out here on the edge of the desert? Well, I guess because I like it out here. It is a long story. My family had a big ranch in Nebraska and one year, I think it was about 1934, the grasshoppers invaded. They ate the corn and other stuff right down to the roots. They covered the walls of the house, even the stuff hanging on the clothes lines. The road was black with them. My grandparents got fed up, sold everything, loaded up my mom and her sisters and came West. They finally decided to settle down here in southern Nevada.

They filed for a homestead and planned to start all over. Remember, they were building the Hoover Dam about that time. This place was just dry desert but somehow they made a go of it: My mom hated it, however. Too isolated for her. When she was 16 she took off for Vegas. The town was only getting started but there were some clubs and there was gambling then. Mom lied about her age and got a job singing at a club down on Fremont Street. She could really sing. Boy! Did she have a voice. But I should get on with my story. My mom and dad met a year or so later, were married and, eventually, had me. Just me!

Dad was six feet four and one smart guy. When they met he was learning the dice table. With his long arms he could reach out and place that stick any place he wanted. When mom got off work they would go play poker. They loved to gamble and were very clever at cards. Lucky, too. They were great people, my folks. Hard workers. . They did all of this work you see here; planted all these palm trees, the grass and made that little creek to run through. Even that waterfall. Dad made that too. This was always our home; a safe and happy refuge. Both my parents died in their fifties, however and I sure miss 'em.

People will say to me "what a terrible way to raise a child. With their lifestyle you didn't expect them to live long lives; did you". Terrible? Let me tell you something about growing up here. I had a wonderful childhood. We took great trips each year and I never wanted for anything. There were always lots of pools and every week we went someplace where I could swim. My wife is gone now and it is lonesome but I just want to stay here in our home and relive all those good old days. Too bad I never had a sister or brother to share those memories.

HOME IS WHERE THE HEART IS

I probably call "home" a bigger house than any of you. It was three stories high with a full basement. I don't remember how many bedrooms there were but I do remember it had a dining room table that seated thirty two of us. Thirty two homeless boys and girls.

Where was this home you ask? Well, it was out in the country in central Indiana. In fact, it was an orphanage.

Oh, I had parents but I don't remember them. There were two of us boys; we were twins. All I can recall is that when we were probably four years old our folks took us to this orphanage. We each had a little suitcase with our clothes. Apparently our folks just couldn't afford to feed us. I think they had a small farm but all of their crops had failed and there just wasn't any money or any food. I don't know what happened to my folks. I know that they never ever visited us.

But the orphanage was home; we were happy there. All the other kids were like our brothers and sisters. We had our chores and we knew what we had to do every day. But that was ok. We never went hungry and we all got along real good. The folks at the orphanage would make a special cake when it was our birthday and they would always give us a big hug at bedtime and even listen to our prayers.

You probably won't believe this but my brother and I used to go back to that orphanage every year for the annual Home Coming. It was so good to see all the kids again. Of course we were grownup by then and lots of us had wives or husbands and some them would come too. The last time we went back, however, it was sad as several of our friends of long ago had passed on. We walked around the grounds and noticed that no one seemed to be caring for the lawns or shrubs anymore. Too bad.

Now it has been such a long time I just wonder if that old brick house is still standing. If it is I'd like to see that table again.

MEMORIES OF THE THIRTIES

We came West in the thirties. My daddy was a newspaper man in Indianapolis but he was restless, and said maybe things were better out on the coast. He had always wanted to see the Pacific Ocean. One day he loaded us into his old Model A and we started out. We had a tent that hooked onto the side of the car and extra tires and a gas can too. Oh, and we had a large collie dog named Tiger.

When we got to California daddy drove right down the coast until we got to San Diego. We put up our tent on the hill where the zoo is now and we stayed there in the tent until December. Mom found a job in a laundry.

Dad was fascinated by the ocean. Every morning he would go look for a job but every afternoon Dad would take us to the white, sandy beach. We all loved to play in the surf. One afternoon dad went out in the water quite a long way. As he was calling to us an unusually large wave hit him in the back; he lost his footing and fell. Before he could get up another wave hit him. That was the last we saw of our daddy. Later we would learn that there had been an unusual rip tide that day.

Well, our mom did everything she could to make a home for us. I was seven and my sister was eight. When she finished at the laundry she would rest for an hour or two then go to work at an all night restaurant. She wasn't home at dinner time but she gave us instructions of how to fix something to eat. She said to count out four slices of bread and cover two of them with peanut butter and jam and then put the other two slices on top, cut them and we would each have two sandwiches. There was milk, too. She said that Tiger would watch out for us and he did. In January we move into a little beach cabin. I remember then that I could lay my slices of bread out on the window sill to fix my sandwiches and that was lots easier than in the tent.

After a couple of years our mama met a nice man. They got married and we moved into his house. He had a boy my age, however, who hated me and did everything he could think of to make my life miserable. One day his dad saw him try to trip me. He gave him a spanking and after that things were much better.

WE KEPT GOING WEST

My earliest memory is of waking up one morning in our home in Peoria, Illinois. I was about four years old so it would have been 1930 or 31. There was no furniture or anything: everything was gone. It was a terrible feeling. Our mother and father put us in our old Model T with a big trailer behind it. I was brokenhearted because there was no room to bring my new doll cradle dad had made me for Christmas. We headed West to New Mexico. I would learn later that my dad had filed on a 320 acre desert land entry west of Roswell. This was to be our new home. At least that was the plan in the beginning.

There were four of us children, my brother and I and my two sisters. Plus we had our dog. We had two mattresses and, at night dad would put these out on the ground and that is where we slept. Our mom cooked our meals on a camp stove. For us kids this was an exciting adventure.

When we got to New Mexico dad went directly to the property to build our new house. We stayed in town with our mother so the older kids could go to school but when the house was finished, we moved out there. It was two rooms, made of rocks and cement and 25 miles from town. There was a one room school about ten miles from our property. Dad started out with big plans to run both cattle and sheep. But it wasn't long before he realized that unless there was enough seasonal rain, we would have no water for our animals.

The drought was terrible. Even the prairie grass dried up. I remember dad taking us out on the range where there had been a water hole. Now, circled about the dried out place where the water was supposed to be were the decaying carcasses of cows and sheep that had died of thirst. It was heartbreaking.

We lasted just five years in New Mexico. My folks came on to Oregon where a relative told dad ever thing grew abundantly. We could pick fruit and vegetables and hops and even ferns to make money. At first, dad cut wood for one dollar a cord. Several years later, my folks were able to buy a nice farm here in the Willamette Valley. After that, everything was fine.

ISLAND GIRL

I was raised on an off shore island of Virginia. The Depression? Well, I was born in 1929, the year of the big crash. But as a child in the '30s, I don't ever remember being poor or even hearing talk about The Great Depression. There were probably a thousand people living on Gwynne's Island and I think every family had a garden. We all had chickens, too. Oh yes, and we all ate lots of fish. It sounds like a real healthy diet doesn't it. I think it was. I remember if any family had troubles, everyone pitched in to help out. We were encouraged to go barefoot, to save our shoes, whenever it was warm enough. When we out-grew them we would pass them on to our siblings or to the neighbor kids. We wore lots of hand-me-down clothes, I can tell you. But we thought that was fun.

My dad had been in World War one. In fact, I have been told that his family thought he had been killed in France. But it turned out that he had been blinded by artillery on the last day of the war and was in a French hospital. They said he was blind but after two years he could see again. I guess his family was totally surprised when he came home. He was a musician and for years played with the Baltimore Symphony. He could play all kinds of instruments. He always felt sad that none of his kids wanted to play the piano or a sax or something.

We had several schools on the island. I went to my first two years of high school out there but we all had to take the boat to the mainland for our last two years. That was an adventure, too. Sometimes it would be so foggy we would have to wait for several hours to make the trip. There must have been hundreds of islands in that bay.

As I think back, I had a wonderful childhood. Even today, I run into folks who lived on Gwenne's Island in those depression years. We have a great time trying to decide who wore whose sweater or favorite winter coat.

GIRL WITH A HORN

We came to Albany when I was in the sixth grade; about 1939. First we lived in Carlton where my grandparents had their home. Then we moved to Vernonia where I learned to play the clarinet. Schools were small in both places but when we moved here, I went to Madison Grade School and it seemed huge. I felt lost for a while but then I learned to play alto sax and that made things better. At Albany Hi I was in the Marching Band and the Pep Band. We played for basketball games and for school dances so, by then, I didn't feel lost anymore.

I was born in Montana; I was two when my family moved to Oregon. My dad was a Master Carpenter and one of his jobs was building and maintaining the scaffolding painters stood on while painting the Newport Bridge. It was high above the water and scary I thought. My Mother, Sister and I went to Newport for a week while he was working there. We went swimming at the big natatorium at Nye beach. You could swim there in heated sea water; it isn't there anymore. Too bad.

We moved to Albany because Camp Adair was getting started and dad helped build it. We lived on SE 2nd Avenue. I met Myrna Moore; we both had bikes and we rode all over Albany. The new courthouse was under construction; we liked to go there. At the west end of 3rd Avenue was the road to Bryant Park which was under water. I learned to love Albany.

In the summer I worked in the fields and my favorite job was weeding some of the crops or stringing up twine for string beans to climb on. Summer in Albany was lots of fun for many reasons and by working I could enhance my school wardrobe.

After I graduated I became a long distance operator. After two years I enrolled in Business College and developed skills needed to be a Certified Professional Secretary; (a CPS degree).

I met Bob while visiting a favorite aunt in Idaho. He was home on leave from the navy and I knew he was the one for me. He came to Albany, we were married and after almost 60 years we are still married.

LITTLE SONG BIRD

I have always loved to sing and when I was a young girl my parents gave me vocal lessons. We lived on Staten Island and I remember it was a long ferry ride to Manhattan where my vocal professor lived. Maybe 45 minutes each way.

I started my lessons when I was just eight years old. After the crash of 1929, my daddy couldn't afford my lessons any more I guess. But one of my aunts was so anxious that I continue to be trained that she made some kind of an arrangement with my teacher. I think the lessons cost one dollar. I went to him every Saturday and counting the ferry each way, it was an all-day adventure.

When I was about 15, maybe 16, someone suggest I try out to sing with a band that was playing at the Log Cabin Night Club. I was hired right off. I think that was in about 1935. I don't think they knew how young I was. I sang with that band for years. Sometimes it was two or three in the morning before I was through. Usually my dad came and took me home when I finished. I think I got paid \$75 a month for singing. Some of my favorite songs were, I'm in the Mood for Love, Pennies From Heaven, Ramona, Italian Street Song, I Love You Truly and Tell Me Why. There were others too.

It was at this night club that I met my future husband. He would come every night just to hear me sing he said. When I was 22 we decided to get married and after that I didn't sing in clubs anymore. But I always sang in the church choir. Maurice and I were married for over forty years. As soon as he retired we began to travel. We went all over the world. But now my Maurice is gone and I miss him so , so much.

People ask me if I will marry again. That is such a foolish question in my estimation. As far as I am concerned I am a married woman .

EASY MONEY!

Town kids had numerous ways to acquire money doing the Depression Years. One of our favorite sources of income was bottles. When our boy cousins came to live with us, they helped us recover the mother of all treasure troves: a cache of whiskey bottles! At first, there appeared to be a problem, however. The bottles were full of whiskey. But my cousins were quick to solve the problem: they just opened the bottles and dumped the moonshine on the ground!

Let me tell you about this heist. The moonshine, we later found out belonged to our neighbor across the street. Even his own kids, who were a part of our neighborhood group, didn't know their dad was making 'hooch'; in fact, they helped us empty the bottles. Apparently the moonshiner thought he had found a very safe place to hide his stash. You see at the end of our street was a big, fenced athletic field complete with covered grand stands. It was under one of these grand stands that the whiskey had been hidden. No one went there except to watch the football games on Friday afternoons.

So now we have all these wonderful empty bottles to sell—maybe thirty or more of them. At a few cents a bottle we were able to each rake in a dime. Big money when you remember that Hershey Bars were five cents each; so was gum. Movies, too if you were under 12. (We said we were.)

Well, the neighbor's kids got grounded for a week. We just didn't mention any of this at our house and nothing ever happened.

Another source of income was our banks. As I recall, if your parents opened a savings account for you, the First National Bank would present each saver with a very nice bank that looked like a leather bound book. In the top was a narrow slit intended for the deposit of the money you had saved. But it could also work for the removal of money you had saved. All that was needed was a silver table knife and a bit of patience. If the knife was inserted in the slot and the bank was shaken vigorously, money would fallout. One problem; eventually no money remained in the bank. Your funds had dried up!

THE DAY THEY GAVE BABIES AWAY

It was about 1933 so I would have been eight years old. On Saturdays my mother and I sometimes walked into Wichita and strolled around at the Saturday Market. One day mother asked our neighbor lady to go with us. I remember it was hot and I think it was a two mile walk into town. We looked at all the vegetables, the fruit and the quilts, some baby rabbits and stuff and then my mother and the neighbor lady decided to go into one of the big department stores. Mom said maybe we would have a five cent root beer if there was a soda fountain. But there wasn't.

I will never forget it. There was a long, narrow table with pink and blue blankets on it. On each blanket there was a little baby. Some of them were fussy and some were sound asleep. There was a woman by the table and she pointed to the sign which said the babies were to give away. All you had to do was promise to give the baby a good home and take good care of it.

We already had six kids in our family and I didn't think my mother wanted any more. But the neighbor lady just kept standing by that table and looking and looking. They had a little girl but she wanted a boy, too. Finally, she picked up a little blue blanket and held it up real close. I saw she had tears in her eyes as she sort of rocked the baby. Then she went over and talked to the lady for a long time. It was so hot that day, but she carried that little baby all the way home. Every time we came to a shade tree we would stop so she could rest.

I could tell she was worried about what her husband would say. Maybe he wouldn't want another child. Especially a baby. Maybe she would have to bring it back. But I guess it turned out all right. She didn't take him back.

THIRD TIME'S A CHARM

Of course you can share this seat with me. Bus is crowded today for some reason. Well, Reno is growing I guess. I forgot to notice; Is that Biggest Little City in the world sign still up over Virginia Street? Lots of traffic there lately.

I grew up here and I sure notice the changes. My folks came here in 1936. We didn't even have stop signs back then. Us kids couldn't go in the casinos but there was still plenty of stuff we could do for fun. We couldn't get work except as maids in the hotels and the tourist cabins. You had to be 21 to work in a casino. Clubs, they called them. Not casinos. My girlfriends and I went to the rodeo one night and I met a great guy. He was so good looking and he had money to spend. None of the boys we knew had jobs since they were too young to work in the clubs too. Well, I started dating Mel and we talked about getting married. At least, I did. He had a nice apartment down there by The Riverside which he was sharing with a friend. They had nice furniture, nice dishes and stuff.

He asked his friend to leave and we got married and moved into his apartment. My folks were against it because Mel was 25 and I was 17. But I was happy. Mel was so good to me and encouraged me to go out with my girlfriends whenever I wanted. He would always give me spending money too. One afternoon I came home early. There was coffee brewing and I thought that was kind of funny. Radio was on, too. I went in our bedroom and there was Mel in bed with his friend Roger. Well, he didn't fight the divorce.

I met Bill a couple of years later. He was fun and he loved to dance. So did I, you know. But Bill was a drinker. I found that out too late. And he was a mean drinker! So that marriage didn't work out either.

Oh! Do you have watch? Good grief, I need to get off at this next stop and hurry home. I didn't realize how late it is getting. I am married to Harry now and he is a wonderful husband, has a good job as a pit boss. Every week he gives me an allowance. Isn't that neat? But I promised him I would clean the house, do the washing and ironing and have his dinner ready when he got home. Harry can't stand messes, you see. So I must rush now. Been nice visiting with you.

AT SEA

It is so beautiful here now. Just like the tropics; everything is blooming. We lived in Japan and it is beautiful too. Our children loved it. I wish I could remember when it was that we lived there. But my husband was stationed there after the war some time. Yes: After World War 2.

My husband was career navy. He had served for thirty years when he retired. I wish I could tell you when that was. I know we met when I was doing my internship at The New England Deaconess Hospital. I know I had graduated from college. No. I wasn't a nurse; it was something, something beyond nursing.

Do I remember the Great Depression? I'm not sure. Did we have it in Boston? Was that before or after the war?

This is funny. I guess I met my future husband when his ship had leave in Boston. I know on about our very first date he told me that when he died he wanted to be buried at sea. He had not even finished high school when he went in the navy. He was stationed aboard a big ship; a battleship. I can't remember which battleship, however. He said his captain arranged for him to complete some college courses while they were at sea. Then, when the war was over he finished school. Was he an engineer? I wish I could say for sure. No. I don't really know. One thing I do remember. He told me that when the navy was outfitting the new Enterprise, he was able to select most of the crew. His captain and he did that.

My doctor says I have Alzheimer's Disease. He said he hated to tell me this but that he had to. There really isn't any cure for it at this time; medications don't seem to help much. Our country needs to find a cure for this as it is affecting more and more older people.

Well, I have lost my husband now. But we had an interesting and wonderful life. We had a son and a daughter. We also lost one child. Then I lost my husband. But, you know, I was able to give him his wish; The navy arranged for him to be buried at sea.

THE CROUPIER

How long have I worked here at Harold's Club? Well, I guess you could say about all of my life. All the way through my years at the University of Nevada anyway. I am due to retire in a couple of months and then the wife and I are going to travel. First we will go see our kids that are scattered all over the country then we will take a world cruise. I never expected to make it up to the top in the industry but here I am.

Kind of funny how it happened. I was a Nevada ranch kid. My folks ran blooded Hereford's for many years. The depression hit late but hard and I guess the price of beef plummeted and the range went dry all at once. There were just years and years of no moisture. Of course the snow pack was real low, too. My folks couldn't make it and finally lost their place when I was a Senior in High School. This really made them just sick because I was their only kid and they had their heart set on seeing me graduate from college. I could get a little sports scholarship but not enough to cover board and room, books, the works. Well, one day I decided to drive over to Reno and look the situation over anyway.

Someone told me to go see Harold Smith, the owner of Harold's Club. I finally got up the nerve and got an appointment. I want you to know I was one scared kid. But Smith leaned back in his chair, looked me over a long time then said, 'Hold out your arms, kid'. Scared to death, I held both arms out as far as I could. He sat there a bit, looking me over then he said, 'Kid, you got nice long arms. I am going to make you into a croupier on the crap table.' He did and I had that job 'til I graduated. He liked me and asked me to work for him upstairs. And that's my story.

You know, the Nevada clubs are famous for helping kids go to school. One of my football buddies had a full scholarship from a club out at Sparks, The Nugget. In the halls they have pictures of all the kids they have helped. You know, it not only helps the kids, it helps the industry and the Lord knows it helps the state, too.

OUR COWBOY DADDY

Our Daddy was a real cowboy. He wore skinny jeans and cowboy boots with sort of high heels and he spent lots of time just pacing back and forth in the kitchen. Especially when it got to be spring. Our mother died when my little sister was born. Daddy tried to take care of us. But he didn't know how to cook or anything.

For a while our grandma came to stay with us; she washed and ironed and cooked all day then one morning she got sick and had to go back to Houston. One morning Daddy got us all dressed up and we went downtown to the police station in a little town near Compton, California where we lived. I was old enough to start school and I think my sister, Alice, was about three. He put Alice up on the counter and told me to go sit in a chair. For a long time he talked to the police lady at the counter. Then he went out to the pickup and brought in a big suitcase and set it on the counter. "Here are their clothes" he said. Then he kissed us both and said for us not to worry; we were going to be just fine. I saw him wipe away some tears and I wanted to cry too. I didn't know what was happening.

"I will be back when I can, honey," he said. "Right now I need to get out and move some cattle and make some money. 'Bye bye'".

Our daddy left then. We never ever saw him again. The police lady took us home. In about a month a woman came from Chicago. She took me home with her and left Alice with the police lady. I never saw my little sister again until we were both grown up and married. Somehow we traced each other and were able to get in touch. Now we visit Alice and her family out in California about once every two or three years. Our children keep in touch, too. But Alice and I often wonder what happened to our cowboy daddy.

ELEPHANT GIRL

You know, I don't, honestly think there was any logical explanation for my unusual career change. It just happened. It felt right, though, so I did it. Before the war, my folks had a little dry cleaning business in Queens. It was 1939. Well, one day they couldn't even pay the rent and they lost all they had. They bundled us kids up and we moved out to Seattle where mom had family. I was just a baby, not even walking yet. For some reason, our dad enlisted in the Air force when the war started and mom and I and my sister stayed on in Seattle. Dad didn't come back from the war. Poor mom. She decided to stay on the West coast near her family and my sis and I went to high school and then college at the University of Washington. My sister graduated but I lacked a year when mom died.

Our mom died in a car accident. We just felt lost: Finally, both of us decided to be airline stewardesses and went to work for Eastern Airlines. Remember Eastern? We had fun, traveled everywhere: From one coast to the other, week after week. Month after month. But finally I realized it was now a routine and I was bored. One night I was sitting here in the Nugget showroom, having a martini with a guy who worked here. I told him I liked coming to Nevada and, for about five cents, I would quit my job and move out here. He said, 'You're kidding!' I finally convinced him I was serious and he said he could get me a job.

He said "Do you like animals?" I told him I loved animals and that I could even speak 'dog'! He laughed, pointed up to the stage where an elephant wearing a red, fez hat was sitting down on a large, white ball. Then he said they had this young elephant here and it needed a trainer. They had apparently just lost or fired their former elephant trainer. He said, "Come on. You wanna meet this lady elephant?" I said, "sure! Let's go"

Right away, we bonded. I don't know how to explain it, but it just seemed like that elephant had been waiting for me. I didn't even hesitate but gave notice to Eastern the next day. Trixie wanted to learn every trick I tried to teach her. And she was so smart. I just had to show her a few times and she had it. What a time we had. Trixie and I were the stars of many, many Nugget shows for years. No. I have never regretted my career change. But now I am happy to be retired.

A 'SHOW-ME' GAL

We left Missouri in 1935 and came West to Oregon. It was quite a trip. We had a 1932 Model B Ford, and pulled a two wheeled trailer. Dad removed the back portion of the trunk, reversed it and made a sort of a rumble seat for us kids. The first night we made it to Iowa. We had traveled from Sedalia which is in west central Missouri. As I remember we made the trip to Oregon in one week. That was good time! We were headed for Philomath.

Dad had worked in Iowa for a year or so. He had to go where he could find work. I can recall how excited we were when he came home. He found a job at a packing plant where he had to slice the hams off the skinned hogs as they went by him on some sort of conveyor. It must have been very hard work.

Our mother was a wonderful seamstress and she had opened a sewing and tailoring business. She could make anything anyone ordered, she was so good. But times were tough. We lived upstairs in a big building and actually slept right on the floor.

If we complained about our food or didn't clean up our plates she would say, "Look out that window. See those men lined up over there across the street? They are hungry; they are waiting for food."

Our neighbor had a visitor from Oregon and he brought great, big, juicy apples. We had never seen fruit like that and thought it the greatest thing we had ever eaten. When he got back to Oregon, believe it or not, he sent us a box of those same apples. That did it! My folks packed up and we headed for Oregon.

We ended up in a tiny house near Alsea. In the summer we picked fruit and stuff. I remember going out in the woods and picking a big bouquet of lady slippers. I didn't know what they were and when I took them to my mother she thought they were the most beautiful wild flowers she had ever seen. Later, our mom started another successful sewing business in Corvallis. I am glad we came West. After I finished school I was the first classified person hired at the new Wah Chang Co. and, later the first classified employee at the new Linn-Benton Community College.

THE SKATER

What a country! What a world! Here I am, an eighty year old year guy recounting my experiences and I have someone to listen to me. I think I will show you my scrap book, too. You know, I was a featured performer with traveling troops of skaters for many years. I was just now thinking about a particular performance of Disney's Snow White and the seven Dwarfs. What a show that was! You can see it all in this scrap book. Go ahead. Take a look.

I grew up in Detroit, the son of a local real estate broker. It was the Great Depression and times were hard. But my three brothers and I were all encouraged to finish high school then to find careers of our choice. I have always been so grateful to our parents for encouraging us to follow our dreams. A dance troop came to Detroit when I was eighteen. I tried out and they liked my work. It sounded like lots more fun than the job I had started a few months before at Chrysler. When they said I was to come to New York for costume fitting and rehearsals I was the happiest kid in town. They even sent me an airplane ticket to New York. What a life!

I was a featured skater and in many shows and was partnered with world famous skaters. In fact I was the last partner of Sonja Heine. Once I was greeted by Queen Elizabeth when we were performing in London. Gee, I met dignitaries around the world in those years. But, then came the War.

I was drafted into the service and placed in Special Services and performed for the troops. After two years I was discharged. I was restless, of course, and eager to skate again but this time it would be ice skating which is a quite different discipline than roller skating. Well, I soon learned, however, and got pretty good. So then I was back in the business. But I made the mistake of marrying my skating partner; she was the love of my life. However, after we were married for three years she left me for another skater. I never remarried. No. Once was enough. But what a life I have had! What a world! Do you like that scrap book? I'm retired now, here in Vegas. I spent five years as a bartender at the Stardust. They gave me my meals plus \$85 a week. I got tips, too. What a world!

A LIFE OF MANY CHANGES

When I was one year old my father died of tuberculosis. He had come to this country as a boy, just fourteen. He came alone from Greece, a strapping big boy, over six feet tall. As so many young men did then he just had a note pinned to his coat advising immigration people that he was to go to Detroit where he had relatives. By the time I was born, in 1921, he had his own bread delivery truck as well as his delivery route. When he died my mother found herself with nothing.

She took my brother and me down to Joliet where she had family. For a while we were cared for by relatives but as soon as I was five years old, she placed us in a home to be cared for while she worked. My mother often worked two jobs. It must have been so hard for her. I know she worked long hours to make ends meet. In time she was able to rent a two bedroom apartment and my brother and I were again able to be with our mother. To help with expenses she kept two men boarders.

As a teenager I hated our mom's loud, hard-drinking boarders and as soon as I could I eloped with my boyfriend and we got married. Very soon he was drafted, however, and went into the air force. We had two children: A boy and a girl. However, after seventeen years of marriage alcohol became a severe problem for him and we parted.

I trained as a dental assistant and found a job with a very fine dentist. Six years later we were married and for many years we worked together. He taught me so very much. We were happily married for 23 years. He was so smart, he could do anything he set his mind to. But after a time he developed diabetes and for 12 of those 23 years he was very ill. After an amputation he found he had heart trouble. Then he suffered a fatal heart attack.

I found myself alone once more. But after several years I met my third husband whom I love dearly. We are now in our golden years and live in an assisted living facility where we are very content. I have had a life of many changes but it has been a good life.

SAMMY'S STORY

We lived in New York City: In Queens. I guess I was five. One morning my dad took a suitcase out of the closet, packed all my clothes and my ball and my red truck in it. We went down stairs and he fixed our breakfast, what we always had, oatmeal and bread and jelly. Then he combed my hair and put my big jacket on me. I remember he was sort of whistling as he did it. He wrote a note and pinned it to my jacket. We went out on the front steps and he gave me a hug and kissed me goodbye. He told me to be good and to stay right there.

Well, I sat there all morning. After what seemed like a long, long time I began to get hungry but I thought my dad would be mad if I moved. I guess I sort of fell asleep. When I woke up a lady was standing over me. She was reading my note. Then she sort of sniffed and looked like she was going to cry. Pretty soon she left.

When she came back she had a man with her. He lifted me up in his arms and gave me a hot dog to eat. Boy! That was the best hot dog I ever had. The lady took my suitcase and we started walking. The man carried me and every few minutes he would give me a little hug. And he kept telling me that this is what my dad wanted me to do. In a few minutes we came to a big car and we all got in. We drove way out to Long Island where we went to the biggest house I had ever seen. This man and woman seemed to like me and they said this was where we were going to live. But I kept waiting for my dad to come and get me. These folks showed me a little room with a bed and some toy trucks around and said that they were all to be mine. I noticed pictures of a boy about my size were on the wall. But no boy was to be seen. I thought maybe he was on a vacation.

I never saw my real father again. After a while I learned to think of Al as my father and the lady, well, I just called her mother. My dad had once told me that my own mother died when I was born. Mother and Al kept the note that was pinned on my coat and when I graduated from City College, many years later, they showed it to me. It said, "If you can feed this poor, motherless little boy, please take him" Wasn't I a lucky kid?

POOR IN THE CITY

We lived in an apartment in Detroit when I was little. Sometimes it was awful cold if my mom was late with the rent or if the landlord forgot to pay his power bill. My dad had tuberculosis and was in the hospital for years.

My mom worked awfully hard to take care of us. She did "bachelor bundles" as she called them. That was doing the washing and ironing for single men. When she was all through with those, her next job was to bake and sell wonderful pies.

Her best was a lemon meringue. Oh, but they were good. Even now, I have never tasted a pie as good as my mom's.

I had a girlfriend in Iowa who said her mother baked pies every day and would put them out on the windowsill. If a man came along who was just travelling around looking for work and was hungry she would give him the pie. She said sometimes men would knock on the door and offer to work for something to eat.

Sometimes a whole family would come through in an old car and would say they were on the way to California and needed a place to park for the night. They would be invited to park their car down by the creek where there was a place they could pitch their tent.

I guess Detroit was one of the hardest hit cities in the country. Even though you could buy a new Ford or Chevy for \$500 or \$600 dollars, folks just didn't have the money to buy them. And that was what Detroit was all about. Right?

Lots of men gave up looking for work. They weren't really hobos, they just couldn't find any way to earn money to feed their families. Sometimes they would leave home; hop a train and sleep in a box car. It was a sad time. Especially for city folks. And especially for the moms who got left with the little children.

I got married very young, like 16 or 17.. That was a terrible mistake. But it didn't last. Thank Heaven for that.

GAMBLIN' GIRL

Looks like we are both waiting for that cocktail waitress to come around again. She's late today. She usually comes by this row of slots about every half hour. Your machine any good? I'm about to give up on mine. You'all come here often? I like the slots here better than in the big clubs, don't you. We came out here from Atlanta way back before the war. Gambling was just getting started then. It was during the depression. It was sure enough a different town then: Not much going on but it was when they were building that dam. Yes, my husband had a job out there. We lived in a little old tent house. There were hundreds and hundreds of them out there. Some folks called it a tent city. We all called it Ragtown and we sure enough got hot: We like to die, we did. Excuse me, I just have to sit a spell. I most likely should be watching for my bus. Guess I'll forget the free cocktail. Does it seem warm in here to you'all?

I live in a retirement home and I don't drive anymore so I don't get down here often. I remember our first summer here. I was just a kid when Sonny and me got married. He was bound and determined to drive to Nevada and see if he could get work on that big dam. Well, I think it was the second winter we were here there was a terrible accident out there and Sonny was one of them as got buried in cement. I still can't bear thinkin' about it. I just didn't know what to do. I didn't have money to go back home and I didn't have a job either. One of the ladies at the camp told me to come with her to Boulder City and she could get me on as a maid at a hotel. Well, I tried that for a few years and then I decided as soon as I could I would learn to be a keno runner.

No cocktail waitress yet? Wonder where she is today? Anyway, I got so I could do it real good. I got on at the old Nevada Club and stayed there for years. There was this blackjack dealer who came on right after my shift. We got real friendly and started going out together. I knew Sonny wouldn't want me to be alone all my life so me and him got married. Bless his heart, he will be worried if I don't show up at our apartment pretty soon. Do you have the time? Bobby is 92 and he ain't much like Sonny but he is a real sweet man, I tell you.

Oh, here is my bus now. Nice visitin' with you'all.

FINDING MY WAY ALONE

Looking back, I have had some pretty rough blows during my life. I lost my husband when he was only forty years old. I lost a son when he was the same age. It seems unfair, doesn't it.

I was raised in Florida and I graduated from high school when I was 17. That was in 1936. Then I went to business college for a year. My daddy was a criminal defense attorney and I got really good at taking dictation and could produce excellent copy for lawyers. I could do it 100% perfect. But I wanted to get married instead of looking for a job. My folks said I was too young but I didn't think so. I thought I knew everything. Well, when they met the fellow I married, they were pleased and said I couldn't have found a better man.

My husband was a navy veteran. He had survived the terrible battles of Iwo Jima and Okinawa then came home and a few years later, suffered a fatal heart attack. I was left with three sons ages 16, 10 and a baby of 21 months. I knew I had to find work and find it fast. I went up and down the street telling my story. My first stop was at our bank. I told them I was a widow with three kids and I just had to have a job. They hired me. I have often wondered what I would have done if I had not found a job.

I guess the load was too heavy for me. After working hard all day I had three kids to care for and I was getting little or no sleep. Then I discovered I could get some relaxation from a glass of wine. Well, you can guess where that went; soon it was taking more and more wine to keep me going until I finished my chores. I was out of control. My middle son could not tolerate the chaos of our crazy home life and he became a victim of my bad behavior. He too, developed an addictive lifestyle.

At some point I was encouraged to go to AA. There I met a wonderful man who helped me with my problem. I stopped drinking. We married and enjoyed some wonderful years together. But, today, once again I am a widow.

MORE THAN A CLASS REUNION

Yes, we are 85 years old and we are newlyweds. But we have known each other almost all of our lives. Well, since we were in high school anyway. Here's what happened. Emma and I both went to Grant High School in Portland. I saw her during our freshman orientation but I was an awful shy kid and I didn't even try to get acquainted. She was soon on the rally squad and in everything that was going on. I was all wrapped up in math and science and stuff like that. Of course I saw her at all the games. In our junior year Emma was homecoming queen. Boy, I really wanted to ask her to our prom but no way was I about to be turned down and besides she seemed to have a steady boyfriend. Also, I didn't have a job or any spending money so I just didn't date.

After graduation I had a scholarship to Cal Tech and I heard Emma went to some eastern girls' school. Then the war started and I was in both theaters. When I finally came home I married a nice girl I had met at the USO. It didn't work out, however and in about ten years we went our separate ways. Besides I was working very hard on an innovative project up at Lockheed. I really didn't need to be married.

Then one day I got a card inviting me to our 50th class reunion at Grant and guess who signed it! Emma. Well, I was living in Florida at the time but I bought a ticket to fly out to Portland to that class reunion. Of course I saw Emma right away and she looked just as pretty as ever to me. I admit it: I hoped she wasn't married.

Well, we talked. Turned out she had lost her husband in a car wreck about two years before. We spent the next three days together. I flew home and sold my Florida property then went out to Oregon. Emma and I started seeing each other real often. Then two months ago we decided to get married. We have a nice apartment in this retirement home and whenever we want to travel we can. But mostly we just sit together and talk about our high school days.

SCHOOL DAZE FOR HELEN

It was still The Depression when I graduated from Monmouth in 1939. But I was offered a position at the Knappa elementary school about 50 miles west of my home in Portland. I considered myself very fortunate. It was a small school with just four teachers and four rooms. Each teacher would handle two grades in one room. I was assigned the first and second grade classes. As I remember I had about 28 or 30 children in my room. I also remember that Oregon schools rated very high nationally as far as teacher preparation requirements and student academic achievement were concerned.

As often happened then, teachers in small remote schools were offered better salaries than many of those teaching in the city. I guess it was harder to fill the rural positions. My starting salary was \$100 a month which was very good for that time. I found a family willing to give me board and room for one dollar a day. With this arrangement I was able, that first year to save enough money for a new car. I remember it cost me \$700. It was a Chevy. These people had a small family farm and many kinds of animals. We had a dog at home but beyond that I had never known any animals and I found I loved to be around the horses especially. They were farm horses. I couldn't ride them but they would come up to the fence and let me pet them on their soft, velvety noses. Then they would sort of "nicker" as if to say, "Thank you, nice lady"

It was all a new experience for me since I had always lived in the city. Now here I was in a village smaller than my old high school in Portland.

Later, when the war was over, I taught at Tillamook, a coastal town both urban and rural. It was then that I met and married my husband, Bill, who had been a paratrooper. We bought a little farm in Tillamook County and raised sheep. After I was married I did not choose to teach. When I lost Bill I decided to come back to Portland and live in this retirement home. I miss the farm but most of all, I miss my Bill.

SECOND TIME AROUND

It was the winter of 1938 that I first met Ivan. We were both completing work for our doctorates in anthropology and looking forward to the time we could get out in the field. After leaving the campus I did not expect to see him again and so it was a big surprise when we both ended up at a dig in central New Mexico. What an exciting reunion that was. We talked for hours the first night and again the next night. In about a week he asked me out for a late night snack and a drink.

Soon we found we were spending all our free time together. When that dig ended we decided we would get married. The first of July I accepted a teaching job at a small college, which I won't name I guess, right there in New Mexico. The staff was very welcoming and I was honored to be there. It was only a two year contract but I felt sure I could do a good job and be rehired. My salary was \$3,000 a year as I recall. Of course I was excited but still I was worried. What if Ivan got a job offer in some other state? Where would we live? What would happen?

Ivan did not get any job offers. He became very disturbed about this and appeared to blame me for some reason I could not fathom. We were invited to numerous faculty parties that first year which I found delightful. Ivan did not. He also developed the habit of contradicting me if I made a professional observation of any kind during a conversation with others in our field. This was very embarrassing. At home he would continue to harass me. One night he grabbed me by the shoulders and turned me about to face him. Then he started yelling at me and shaking me. I was truly frightened.

I decided to leave Ivan and we were divorced after two years of marriage. I felt like a failure. I did not sign my new contract but instead left the Southwest and headed for Chicago. I found I was totally exhausted. But I also knew I had to find a job to survive. Someone was advertising for a tutor and companion for a homebound child. I answered the ad and was hired. Today I am still married to the widower who hired me and we are very happy. And believe it or not, he taught anthropology.

BUS STOP

Mind if I sit down here and chat with you while we wait? This bus is usually right on time. Little late today. I have been riding it now for about ten years. My mom lives here and her idea of a big time is for me to take her out of this rest home, wrap her up in her warmest coat and take her for a ride on the bus. She is ninety four and I guess when she was young her folks didn't have a car and when she was on her own she wasn't allowed one. Hard to believe isn't it. I've got that red Camero out front but she insists on the bus! It must bring back some good memories of times with my dad.

Excuse me. I need to check my cell phone: Someone took mom to the restroom and it seems like they should be back by now. You have the time?

Let me tell you about my mom. She lived in Idaho. Her folks had a farm but in the big depression they were starved off their land. Mom and my dad ran off and got married when they were nineteen. Dad had started college and he wanted to finish and go to law school but he got polio and died when I was three years old. Mom couldn't go back home as her parents hadn't forgiven her for running off so she got what money she had together and caught a ride to Reno where she heard jobs were easy to get. Reno was a wide open town then. But she couldn't make enough money to take care of me and feed and house us and there was no help she could tap into then. She was desperate; she did the obvious, only thing she could do; She went on the line at a ranch outside Reno. That's where I grew up: In a brothel about twenty miles from here. Really! I'm not kidding.

Those women were so good to me. Every morning they would check me out; see if my hair was combed; see if I needed lunch money or maybe a nice clean handkerchief. You know, like I was their own kid. Some even helped years later when I was in law school. Yeah. Sad, isn't it. But think about it. What could they do? Most were totally untrained, usually all alone and with no viable way to support themselves. And my mom had me, a baby, to think of. Poor kid.

Here they come with my mom. Look! Isn't she just a picture!

WILLKOMMEN, WILLKOMMEN!

All four of my grandparents came to this country from Germany. They were all able to realize the American Dream and enjoy happy and successful lives. Oh, they had to deal with the usual problems. And because they settled in the Midwest, they also had to deal with the dust storms as well as the Great Depression. They were determined to escape the endless wars of Germany and the iron rule of Bismarck.

One grandfather made his way, first to England, then attempted to come to America as a stowaway on a sail ship. He hid in a cracker barrel in the hold where he nearly starved to death. But he made it! He came to Wisconsin and when he had saved enough money he sent for my grandmother. Later on, they moved to Iowa.

My other grandfather was a sailor on the Rhine River and also a prize fighter. But he too, was determined to come to this country. And he did!

One of my great grandfathers had come here to avoid fighting in the Franko-Prussian war.

My parents farmed in South Dakota during the 1930s. I recall my dad saying he first knew it was a depression when he took a load of oats to town and didn't get enough money for the oats to pay for his gas. My grandparents and my parents decided to move West. My dad bought a Model T Ford truck and my grandparents, a Model A car. They loaded everything they owned into those two rigs and they started for the West coast. Their goal was Sunnyside, Washington where my grandfather had a cousin. My brother Bill and I rode on the truck bed. Just think. I would have been born in Germany if circumstances had been different.

A TRUE SOUTHERN BELLE

You asked me why I avoid going out in the sun. I guess it is just habit. We Southern girls were so careful not to get suntanned. You see it was like this: When I was a girl my daddy owned a large cotton plantation in Georgia. We had lots of share croppers. They worked in the cotton fields all day and got very suntanned. We girls always wore gloves and big sunhats if we had to go out in the sun so nobody would mistake us for the cotton pickers. Yes, the plantation had been in our family for many generations. Daddy said even during the War Between the States it survived. Did you know my grandma always called that war, "the recent unpleasantness.?" I guess it was quite terrible, really.

In the Great Depression years some of our sharecroppers had trouble making their payments because the cotton price went so low. Then there were the awful old boll weevils. Yes, it was hard for the sharecroppers, I am sure. But our daddy carried those poor souls. He even sent them food baskets. I sent them out my old clothes as I remember.

I guess money was very tight for some time. I know I didn't get to come out the year I was supposed to which was quite dreadful. Instead, I had to wait a year and come out with my younger sister. However, our gowns were the finest ones at the cotillion. Mother had a French dressmaker, highly recommended, from Atlanta come and stay at our home for several months just to make sure our dresses were perfect fits. The material came all the way from Paris.

I know we had the very best band that year and the greatest food ever. My escort was truly impressed. My little sister was engaged to be married to her young man and the next year we helped her plan the wedding. Too bad he lost his position and the wedding had to be postponed, indefinitely.

But, no, you will not see a southern girl with brown or freckled hands. No mam!

PEELIN' CHITIM BARK

I don't think my dad's family had ever been farmers but dad had majored in Agriculture at O.A.C. and I suppose he was anxious to give it a try. At any rate, we had this little farm, about twenty miles inland from the coast in southern Oregon. Dad's mother, my grandma, 'Lizabeth, lived with us. I think her main job was to keep track of me! I was probably about five and had a penchant for wandering.

Although the farm had grain, garden vegetables, beef, hogs and eggs to sell, grandma said we should peel "chitim bark". We would head for the woods looking for the tall, skinny little trees, grandma carrying the sharp peeling knife while I dragged along a gunny sack in which to store the bark. When she located a cascara tree, she took her knife and made a long, vertical slit in the deep green bark. I should point out that cascara is the real name of the tree and its bark contains an ingredient used in laxatives. When our sack was full we would sell it to the feed store in Coquille. All we had to do was put it aboard the mail boat: (The helpful boat captain would take it to the buyer for us.)

Grandma was an expert at removing chitim bark. She would make a horizontal cut at each end of the slit, then make another vertical slit. Now she could work her hand under the bark and, whop! A nice big hunk of the slick bark would come loose and I could put it in my sack.

When we were through for the morning, we had to take all of the bark and put it up on the fence to dry. Once it was up on the fence, it was very important that it did not get wet so we had to keep a close eye on it and be sure we watched for rain. The feed store bought only nice, dry chitim bark.

We did not become independently wealthy at this enterprise but I do recall that I had a few dimes and one or two quarters to put in my bank. We were "saving up" for something but I don't remember what that was! Once I was allowed to buy some candy corn for a few pennies. We called our chitim bark take, our "walkin' around money"

THE DANCER

We lived in Chicago when I was a girl. I graduated from high school when I was just sixteen, too young, my mother said, to go to college. But I had other ideas anyway. Since I was four years old I had been taking dancing lessons and that was my first love. A friend told my mother that the Chez Paree Night Club was interviewing for their dance troupe which performed at the club and also took road trips. That was about 1935.

I made the cut and the first thing I knew I was a professional dancer. Sure. I had to fudge a little on my age. But it worked out and I loved it. In high school I had been friends with one particular boy. But we didn't make any long range plans or anything like that. We didn't talk about marriage; Bill didn't have any money, of course. He went his way and I went mine. He had a scholarship, graduated from college and then was drafted into the army. I continued to be a dancer. It was a wonderful life and I loved it. But sometimes I was lonely. I would think about Bill. I wondered if he remembered me: I wondered if he was married.

Still, I was having fun. Our costumes were simply beautiful and I even have pictures of them. You know, looking over some of my old income tax returns I realize now that we were well paid for those times.

When we were on the road we went to all the major cities and had all sorts of experiences. We were often booked for national conventions. It was the depression but people still liked to have a good time, I guess.

After the war was over, Bill and I met again and this time it was serious. We were engaged for a short time and then we got married. We had five children and a wonderful, happy life together. But two years ago I lost Bill. I just wish we had been married sooner. Somehow we would have managed.

LITTLE TOY MAKER

In the 1930s we didn't have all the stuff kids have today so sometimes we invented our own toys. When I was five we lived on a farm in southern Oregon. We had a garden, a barn, some Jersey cows and a collie dog, Chum, to watch over me. I roamed wherever I wished as my mom was often busy with my new baby sister. Chum walked with me and dispatched the birds and squirrels. One morning my mom filled my red wagon with some trash she wanted my dad to add to his burning pile. Chum and I headed for the place daddy had raked together stuff he planned to burn as soon as we had a cool, rainy day.

As I emptied my wagon, I noticed two things I had never seen before. They looked like piled-up circles of wire. I put my foot on one; it went flat! I lifted my foot and it came right back. I tried the other round wire with my other foot. Same thing. Where had I seen something else act like this? Once more I tried each foot. The same thing happened again! And again!

Then I remembered: Our next door neighbor, Mrs. Brown had an organ in her front room. It had foot things she would press with first one foot and then the other. Sort of like the wires. When she pressed them she could make music and she would sing church songs; songs like Jesus Loves the Little Children.

That settled it. I would build an organ. I already had the foot things didn't I! Into my wagon they went. Somewhere in the barn I found an apple box. When up-ended, it became the organ. The round things went inside. I rolled an old chopping block in front of my box-organ. I could sit down, rest my feet on the wire things and make music. Now I was the church choir, too. Oh, and I was the minister. I made up a big talk like he did. Then I decided to baptize my doll, Mazy. I needed holy water so I blessed some water. What else did I need? Should I baptize my teddy bear? How about baptizing my baby sister?

I had lots of problems to solve! When I think about it, those toys we made for ourselves were quite resourceful. At least they got the job done. Besides, there was no money for store-bought stuff.

THE LONGEST JOURNEY

My Grandma has told me so many times about their heartbreaking trip to Oregon in 1931 or 32. They had a small farm near Enid, Oklahoma. There were eight children in the family and there was never enough of anything. Then came the depression and my grandfather found he no longer had orders for the milk and cream he usually sold to the Enid creamery. Times were really tough. Every day he and grandma would hear about this or that business going under and about the soup line set up in downtown Enid.

One day Grandma got a letter from her aunt out in Oregon. It was glowing with the tales of the wonderful fruit and vegetables they could grow. In fact, she said that the ripe fruit was just falling off the trees, And how great the weather was; no dust storms ever. No blinding hot summers.

That did it. Grandpa decided he would sell his land if he could and he would move his family out to Oregon. He had two or three fine cows and he decided to trail them along behind the car and sell two of them if he could. One he would keep for milk for the kids. They had a tent and they could camp at night.

Well, Grandma and Grandpa loaded up their old car. I guess it was piled high with beds, cooking stuff, kids and everything else they could cram in. They had to drive real slow on account of the cows and the fact that two or three of the kids had to walk. There just wasn't room in the car.

Somewhere in Texas little Rosie got hit and dragged by the car. Her injuries were severe. They were able to get her into a hospital but had no money to pay her expenses. There was nothing they could do. They simply had to travel on and leave her there.

They never saw Rosie again. Eventually the rest of the family arrived in Oregon and settled down in McMinnville. But they often wonder about the little girl they left in Texas.

DOG DAZE

It is hard to realize that during the Great Depression folks in our country were actually starving to death. We heard our parents talk about bread lines but we didn't pay much attention. At eight and nine, we had other things on our minds.

One winter our folks put us in the car to take a camping trip to Arizona. I think it was during the Christmas Holidays. We had a small camp trailer; There was just a bed plus a sofa that made up into a bed for us girls. No bathroom. It was comfortable but Dad always tried to get to a camp early enough in the afternoon so he could park reasonably close to the restrooms.

Well, on this bright December day around 4 P.M., we pulled into a campground at Honey Lake in northern Nevada. Dad hooked up the water and turned on the gas so mom could get supper while us girls went out to the playground.

A family with a large tent came to camp next to us. They rigged up a sort of a clothes line and the woman started washing clothes in an old tin tub. Four or five little kids appeared. They came a bit closer to the trailer than our poodle could tolerate and he let us know it, too. About then mom called us in for supper. We were on the teeter-totter but she had no trouble getting us to come in when she promised hot dogs and chips.

As we were about to go inside our trailer, the woman from the tent, who looked about mama's age, but tall and very thin, came to the door. She looked weary and terribly sad.

"Excuse me", she said politely to our mom, "I have just used my last can of dog food. I wonder if I could buy one from you; I noticed that you also have a dog".

Our mom laughed and reached into a cupboard and pulled out a large can of Iams dog food. "No need to pay me," she said. "Hope your dog likes this brand".

In a few minutes each child appeared with a little plate on which was a mound of Iams. They gobbled it down without a word. The dog? We never saw one."

TIMBER!

In 1924 my dad was a timber faller for a logging company up in Bothel, Washington. He specialized as a tree topper and he made good money. You see, those big old-growth fir trees had to be topped before they were felled or they would split up when they came down. Dad had a partner and he and his partner would get \$25 for each tree they topped. That was real good money in those days. But one day, in a logging accident his partner was killed. That was enough for dad and he quit. He decided to relocate and get into another line of work which was less dangerous. That was in 1928.

Dad loaded mom and my sister, 7 and me, 5 and our baby sister, 2, in our model A and headed South. One night we stopped here in Albany. Dad rented a cabin down in a place called Allen Camp. I think it was on Periwinkle Creek, off Salem Road. What a fun place that was! There were lots of kids around and my sister and I were having the time of our lives: We didn't want to leave and begged to stay on there. I guess mom and dad talked it over and decided, why not. This was as good a place as any to start a new life!

Dad invested some of his \$2,500 savings in Raleigh Products which he would sell from door to door to the farmers in the countryside around Albany. He got lots of orders alright but nobody had money to pay for the stuff they wanted to buy. Well, dad finally took a job that was less dangerous than tree topping; he went to work for the Dollar Logging Company up at Fall City. On that job he would rig up the spar trees. Those were the trees used as sort of anchors for equipment and for snaking out logs: Today there is heavy equipment used for that. There were lots of deer in the hills up there and he kept my mother busy canning deer meat. Boy, was that ever good! He kept the deer season open all year long, let me tell you. Later, he went to Diesel School. Dollar had some big D8 Cats and he was put to work building roads for the company and servicing the equipment weekends. In 1942 when I graduated, I went in the navy. Dad sold our house and became a commercial fisherman out of Newport. All in all, I don't think our family suffered too much in the Great Depression.

ORPHAN BOY

When I was ten years old I found myself in a Jewish Orphanage in Westchester County, New York. But I wasn't an orphan. I had a father and mother but my father decided supporting a wife and family didn't appeal to him; when I was five years old, he left. My mom wasn't trained to hold down the kind of job she would need to provide for us plus she was very young. Looking back, it must have been a scary time for her. That was 1938 and it was still the depression. For about six months I lived with my Jewish grandparents. My grandmother spoke only Yiddish and I learned, quickly, to speak her language

We had lived in The Bronx. When my mother took me to this orphanage she didn't tell me what was going to happen. But at some point I realized that my mother was gone and I was left in this strange place all by myself. I cried. I cried every night for the first three months. Then I stopped. I decided right then that I would never need anyone so badly that it would make me cry. I would be my own guy. At thirteen I had my Bar Mitzvah at the Waldorf Astoria, courtesy of some Jewish benefactors in our neighborhood. I lived at the orphanage until I was sixteen. I ran away several times but when I was old enough to work I got a farm job; I learned to milk cows and do farm work. I saved up some money and decided I would go to Israel. About this time I met a young lady and decided she was the love of my life. I even asked her to marry me. She just laughed. She let me know I wasn't exactly ready to get married.

Well, I went to Israel alright but it wasn't exactly the perfect commune I had envisioned. I got together enough money to get back to New York and home.

I went in the Navy for four years. Got some more education and even trained in electronics. Later, by going to night school I graduated from high school. I married and we had a little daughter. I started a business, went to school nights and got a BA degree then on to graduate school. Too much stress wrecked our marriage, however, and we divorced. I had a career as a psychologist and counselor. My second wife and I have been happily married for 30 years. Now, we are here in this retirement home. Our working days are ended. I've come full circle.

SAFE IN AMERICA

Do I have an accent? I thought it was gone by now. I suppose I still sound German. Or maybe French. My mother was French but she died when I was ten.

My father was a doctor, a psychiatrist in Frankfurt. We lived in a beautiful part of the city right by a park. One day I came home and there was Papa just walking back and forth in his study. At first he didn't talk at all; just walked and shook his head. This went on for the rest of the year; then one day when I was almost fifteen he called me to his study. He said, "Gilda, you are old enough to hear this but we won't discuss what I am going to say with anyone. No one. Do you understand? This man Hitler is a bad man. He is going to ruin our country and there is nothing that can be done about it."

Well, Papa had never talked to me like this before and I was very frightened. I had always assumed that my Papa was all powerful and could make anything happen that he wanted to happen. I was just terrified. Really!

About six months later he called me in again and said, "Gilda, I have arranged for you to travel to America. I have a sister in Boston and she wants you to come there"

I didn't want to leave our home and Papa and my friends and go to some one didn't know. But Papa said it was absolutely necessary. Then he told me something I had never heard before. He said we were Jewish and that Hitler wanted to cleanse Germany of Jews. We didn't go to Temple, we didn't eat Kosher, we were no different than anyone else we knew. I couldn't understand.

But Papa convinced me that he was in danger and I was, too. That I simply must go to America to be safe. Before long he took me to Bremerhaven where he put me aboard a ship and gave the purser a bunch of papers and I sailed away from Germany for ever. Papa, I learned years later, died in a concentration camp.

I found a job as a maid for a Boston doctor. Well, to make a long story short, they had a son who was an engineer. We fell in love and were married a few years later. Sadly, my James is now gone. But here I am; safe in America

CONCLUSION

There's an old saying, "Something good comes from everything." But is this true? As I listened to these tales of suffering and privation endured by many folks during those Depression Years, I am not so sure. Happy Endings were not always there. Some memories could not be erased.

I will offer this, however; relationships developed in those "bad old days" of the Great Depression were deep. Who can ever forget a neighbor who loaned you "just a little coffee until the first of the month": Or perhaps one who shared the last of her laundry soap? Who would want to forget? John and I were married students at Oregon State College before World War 2 at a time when there was no such thing as a "student loan". If there was, we never heard of it! Our budget was so tight we didn't buy anything unless absolutely necessary. Were we poor?

I don't know. Were we? We didn't have time to think about that. We had a goal and we were ready to fight dragons, if necessary, to reach that goal. Fortunately, we were both reasonably healthy and never needed medical care. That helped!

We occasionally got "care packages" from our parents; perhaps some fresh vegetables or some canned fruit, once some deer meat to put in our 'locker'. Our rent was \$25.00 a month and that included electricity. I guess we just wore jackets if it got cold because I don't recall any kind of a heating stove in our one and a half room remodeled (garage) apartment. We were fine. Just fine. But as revealed in these little stories, many other folks were not "just fine".

Today most of the privations and horror stories of the 1930s need not and would not happen. We have social programs in place for such emergencies. Our country learned many lessons from those terrible years of dust storms, drought, economic collapse and social upheaval.

Then came the Pearl Harbor attack and the war that would change our lives forever.

REMEMBERING PEARL HARBOR

December 7, 1941, Corvallis, Oregon: For days a heavy fog has enveloped the Willamette Valley and now it is freezing on the tree branches. I make a sweep with the dishtowel across a frost-covered kitchen window and note the dim outline of a China Pheasant in the field behind our 29th street house. Now he seems to be calling to his mate. Maybe she is lost in this fog.

John has gone downtown to his service station job and I have promised to type his term paper. I add a chunk of wood to the living room heating stove and turn down the dampers. It is early but I need to get dressed and start typing. It is a long paper I have already noted. It looks boring, too.

There is a shout at the door and now a loud knock:

"Betty, Betty., Open the door. The Japs have bombed Pearl Harbor. We are at war" My next door neighbor, still in her robe, is frantically pounding and shaking our front door.

When she is inside, I can see her face is flushed from crying and she trembles as she clings to me.

War! I couldn't believe it. And where was Pearl Harbor? I had never heard of it. And why were the Japanese bombing us. I didn't understand any of this. My neighbor leaves to spread the news and then I notice that I too, am trembling. War! I had only read about such attacks in History class. But not on the United States. Not on us. I decide to dress quickly, try to catch the little bus down Monroe Street and go find John. I have to tell him. I am shaking now so badly that it is difficult to tie my shoes. For some reason my teeth want to chatter too, and then the stupid tears start and just won't stop.

This then, will always be my memory of the morning of December 7, 1941.

